

Message Text

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21

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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TO USIA WASHDC

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USIA FOR IAU AND IOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF OPINION IN NIGER TOWARDS U.S.

REF: USIA 10677

1. NO LASTING DAMAGE FORESEEN TO U.S. IMAGE AS WORLD POWER OR PROGRESSIVE SOCIETY. NONETHELESS NIGERIENS SHARE THIRD WORLD SENTIMENTS FAVORING NORTH VIETNAM AND VIET CONG. NIGER FOREIGN MINISTER PUBLICLY CONGRATULATED PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT SOUTH VIETNAM ON "VICTORIOUS AND OF HEROIC STRUGGLE". HE SAID VICTORY COMING SOON AFTER NIGER RECOGNITION PRG OFFERS "JOYOUS OCCASION DEMONSTRATE TO PEOPLE OF SOUTH VIETNAM AND TO THEIR REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT THE ADMIRATION AND SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE OF NIGER AND OF THEIR GOVERNMENT". NO MENTION OF U.S. IN STATEMENT. NO EDITORIAL COMMENT HAS APPEARED TO DATE FOR OR AGAINST FALL OF SAIGON. DURING PAST MONTH MEDIA HAVE CARRIED NEWS AGENCY (MAINLY AFP) STORIES INDOCHINA DEVELOPMENTS ALMOST DAILY AND VIRTUALLY ALL FAVORABLE COMMUNIST CAUSE.

2. GON ACKNOWLEDGES DEBTOWED U.S. FOR RECENT DROUGHT

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ASSISTANCE AND ECONOMIC AID PROGRAMS. GOVERNMENT SEEKS

CONTINUED U.S. INVOLVEMENT NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORT. THESE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN ALL DEALINGS WITH AID AND RESTATED RECENTLY BY FOREIGN MINISTER DURING MEETING WITH VISITING NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE TEAM (SEE NIAMEY 1576). VIETNAM DEVELOPMENTS HAVE NOT DIMINISHED GON VIEW OF U.S. AS MAJOR INFLUENCE WORLD EVENTS WHETHER POLITICAL MILITARY OR ECONOMIC. BUT NIGER CONSIDERS ITSELF FAR FROM MAIN CURRENT WORLD POLITICAL MOVEMENTS AND ONLY VAGUELY AFFECTED BY THEM. GOVERNMENT DOES LOOK TO U.S. FOR NEW INITIATIVES IN WAR ON HUNGER. ALSO VIEWS U.S. AS TECHNOLOGICAL FRONT RUNNER.

3. U.S. HAS NO DEFENSE COMMITMENTS WITH NIGER.

4. DETENTE REPRESENTS ONE OF THOSE INTERNATIONAL PREOCCUPATIONS THAT ALMOST COMPLETELY BYPASS NIGER. MEDIA OCCASIONALLY CARRY NEWS AGENCY STORIES ON DETENTE BUT NEVER ANY EDITORIAL COMMENT. NO GON OFFICIAL IS KNOWN TO HAVE COMMENTED PUBLICLY OR PRIVATELY ON THE SUBJECT.

5. NO PERCEIVABLE CHANGES IN NIGER ATTITUDES TOWARDS U.S. AS RESULT VIETNAM DEVELOPMENTS AND NO MEASURABLE EFFECT ON U.S. INTERESTS HERE. COMMENT BY HIGH FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL TO DCM PROBABLY REPRESENTS BROADER GOVERNMENT-HELD VIEW. HE SAID END OF AMERICA'S VIETNAM QUOTE ADVENTURE UNQUOTE FINALLY SHOULD GIVE U.S. INCENTIVE IT NEEDS TO TURN NATION'S ATTENTION TO LEGITIMATE FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS. ADDED WISTFULLY: "INCLUDING AFRICA". SYNODIS

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